

THE  
**FUTURE**  
OF  
**AMERICA'S**  
**NATIONAL**  
**PARKS**

First Annual  
Centennial Strategy for

# Missouri National Recreation River

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: MNRR

Year: 2007

### Vision Statement

Missouri National Recreational River preserves two segments of some of the last free-flowing portions of the once-wild Missouri River. Not only is the "rec river" a unit of the NPS, it is also part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The western 39-mile reach has one of the best natural landscapes associated with the river along its entire course, very reminiscent to that reported by Lewis and Clark in 1804-06. The eastern 59-mile reach--with its wide, meandering channel, shifting sandbars, and secondary channels--contains some of the last forested floodplain and floodplain wetland habitats on the river. Both reaches provide habitats for several threatened and endangered species.

Geographically, the two districts lie along the South Dakota-Nebraska border and on either side of the 98th Meridian, considered the eastern border of the Great Plains. The park's history boasts American Indian homelands and Lewis and Clark, as well as fur trappers and traders, steamboat captains, and settlement of the Great Plains. Numerous steamboat wrecks lie beneath the river's sandy bottom.

MNRR is a recreation oriented park with boating, fishing and hunting predominant. Primitive camping associated with canoeing/kayaking along the river is becoming more popular and will be increasingly more so as new locations are identified.

The Centennial vision for the park and its partners is to develop our education capacity through exciting new interpretive displays, to draw in new audiences through off-site programming, and to provide more effective orientation and safety information for park visitors through a park film and a handbook. New recreation opportunities include a canoe trail and a hiking/biking trail partnership with the City of Yankton (SD) and Cedar County (NE). Other new facilities include limited development of the Bow Creek and Green Island tracts. Future resource management efforts will include ecological restoration of these two tracts through removal of exotic plant species.

MNRR has a growing list of supporters including the umbrella Missouri River Corridor (Assn.) and has a partnership with Jefferson National Parks Association.

Resource management partners such as the Missouri River Institute, the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission are already at work restoring the Missouri River.

Park management and its partners are looking forward to the opportunities that the Centennial Challenge will present in order better to serve the visitor and protect valuable resources.

### Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Paul Hedren

Site: MNRR

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Providing interpretive/orientation exhibits in partner visitor centers would orient park visitors to the national recreational river and surrounding resources. The NPS will have the opportunity to present safety messages and provide information and educate visitors about the park's resources. Working with park's partners in developing a regional trails network will serve the recreational needs of an increasing percentage of the visiting public.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: MNRR

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.

Eradicating invasive species on lands acquired by the park will allow for the restoration of native habitats and preserve and enhance the park's natural resources. In addition, the park would work with public and private landowners to accomplish this goal on lands not managed by the park.

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Improve the natural resources in parks, as measured by the vital signs developed under the Natural Resource Challenge.

Creating a land protect program and providing funds for conservation easements will help protect critical resources and hence improve or conserve resources measured through the vital sign monitoring program (water quality, vegetation, specialized plant communities, etc.).

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Site: MNRR

STEWARDSHIP

**Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.**

**Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

A land protection program will help protect the riverine lands that are crucial in ensuring good water quality, species diversity and protect watersheds. Preventing undesirable development of private lands along the river and keeping lands in current agricultural uses is a high priority of the NPS.

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Site: MNRR

STEWARDSHIP

**Encourage children to be future conservationists.**

**Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Interactive exhibits in partner visitor centers and wayside exhibits, as well as interpretive program content would enhance the ability of the NPS to encourage youth to be conservation minded.

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Site: MNRR

ENVIRONMENT

**Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.**

**Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.**

Wayside exhibits, exhibits in parkner visitor centers and interpretive programs would target the importance of efficient water use and conservation, good land stewardship, and the importance and value of maintaining and promoting ecological biodiversity along the river corridor.

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Site: MNRR

**ENVIRONMENT**

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

By engaging partners in developing multi-use recreational trails and in eradicating invasive species, the NPS will set the example for regional environmental stewardship and awareness. Sustainable use practices will be emphasized and showcased nationwide.

Establishing a land protection program would help to inform and educate the local public about the importance of keeping lands in current agricultural uses and developing sustainable practices that use Best Management Practices for farms and housing tracts. Funding for conservation and scenic easements would be a critical component.

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Site: MNRR

**RECREATION**

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Working with private and public partners in developing and establishing a regional multi-use recreational trails network would serve the needs of an increasing number of regional residents and park visitors.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: MNRR

RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase visitation by 25 percent at lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people to discover the breadth of parks and experiences.

Developing and installing MNRR exhibits at partner visitor centers will enable more visitors to become familiar with the park thereby increasing a desire for a firsthand visit. In addition, providing minimal visitor improvements on park lands would increase the likelihood of increased water-borne recreation visitation.

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Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Increased number of seasonal interpretive employees and placing them at partner visitor centers would allow park to reach more visitors. Also, park would be able to increase personal and non-personal services, both on-site and off-site.

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Site: MNRR

EDUCATION

Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Park will continue to improve its Junior Ranger program and provide online teacher resources and employ latest appropriate technology in attracting young park visitors, such as podcasts.

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Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Park exhibits for installation in partner visitor centers would use modern media and technology to interact with park visitors but also to engage in a firsthand visit with the resource.

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Site: MNRR

**EDUCATION**

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

Park has a current Junior Ranger program and will continue to update it. The Lewis and Clark Visitor Center provides a centralized point of contact for the NPS to reach Junior Rangers. Stationing seasonal interpretive employees at partner visitor centers will provide more contact opportunities for this program.

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Site: MNRR

**EDUCATION**

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

Park is still relatively new with fairly low visitor recognition. Development of and placement of interpretive exhibits in partner visitor centers and in newly-acquiring lands would increase public perception, understanding and appreciation of the park.

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Site: MNRR

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.

Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.

Every effort will be made to recruit locally among American Indians for employment opportunities in the expansion of the Interpretive Division and the establishment of a Protection Ranger Division.

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Site: MNRR

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

Providing expanded NPS personal services contacts in partner visitor centers and river patrol rangers will enable the NPS the opportunities to reach park visitors directly and to educate them about having a safe river and recreation visit. Interpreters could reach the public in the field and assist patrol rangers in distributing safety messages to park visitors.

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